



Georgia Safe Routes to School Resource Center Monthly Progress Report February 2014

Highlights

During February, six schools partnered with the Resource Center; the attached list provides the names of our 421 Partner Schools. Outreach staff gave five presentations and held 148 meetings with stakeholders and schools. This month, the team continued providing assistance for two School Travel Plans by conducting walk audits and facilitating planning meetings. Additionally, the team promoted Georgia Walk to School Day (gWalk) and delivered incentives to registered events.

Outreach Summaries

Metro Atlanta Territory - Nichole Hollis, School Outreach Coordinator

Nichole works with 129 Partners in the Metro Atlanta Territory. **Webb Bridge Elementary School** (Fulton County Schools) was added as a school partner on February 20th and will be participating on Georgia Walk to School Day. Nichole continued to work with **Springdale Park Elementary School** (Atlanta Public Schools) on travel plan initiatives and also met with existing schools to discuss progress reports for the school year and Georgia Walk to School Day event plans.

Charles L. Gideons Elementary School (Atlanta Public Schools) and **Harper Alexander Elementary School** (Clayton County Schools) were inactive schools that recently decided to participate in Safe Routes to School this school year due to new school champion support. Both schools will hold a kick-off event on Georgia Walk to School Day to create awareness for physical activity. Charles L. Gideons has 100 students that currently walk to school and more than 200 students that attend after-school programs at their local recreation facility in Pittman Park. There will be a walk to school event and a walking event to the after-school program on Georgia Walk to School Day. Harper Elementary School has 150 students that currently walk to school and will have additional support from **Safe Kids Clayton** during their walking event. Safe Kids Clayton has recently provided the school with four slow down signs on school grounds and has helped to organize walking school buses for their event.

Springdale Park Elementary school (Atlanta Public School) was able to complete meetings two and three for travel plan initiatives. Planners from Toole Design group presented draft recommendations to GDOT and Public Works employees as part of the taskforce group. The group was able to discuss problem areas around the school and the planners were able to identify future needs. Springdale currently has 323 students that are able to walk to school. They will be holding their first waking event on March 5th as a way to encourage walkability and to support non-infrastructure goals.

Nichole presented at **Henderson Mill Elementary School's** (DeKalb County Schools) PTA Meeting. She emphasized the importance of parent involvement and support on the school's upcoming Georgia Walk to School Day. She also reviewed the benefits of Safe Routes to School and mentioned the school's walk to school event on

March 28th. The Girl Scout Troops at the school have decided to volunteer on the event day as their service project for the semester.

In March, Nichole plans to focus on Georgia Walk to School Day events and also encourage activities for National Nutrition Month, which promotes physical wellness.

North Georgia Territory - Alicia Hatcher, Senior School Outreach Coordinator

Alicia met with Sallie Thomas, PE teacher at **Pleasant Grove Elementary School**, after the school signed up for Georgia Walk to School Day. Ms. Thomas works with the **Power Up for 30** program and learned of Georgia Walk to School Day through their promotion of the event. Although the school is not able to encourage students to walk or bike to school because of its location on a busy highway, Ms. Thomas plans to have students walk during PE and teach pedestrian safety from the NHTSA curriculum. The school officially signed as the newest Partner in North Georgia on February 25th.

Roan Elementary School has a new School Champion after their former leader recently moved to Texas. Wendy Houston will take over as School Champion this year and continue the great SRTS program at Roan. Ms. Houston is a new para-pro at the school and is very enthusiastic about the program. The school will participate in Georgia Walk to School Day and continues to have over 200 walkers each day.

Alicia attended the monthly meeting for **Safe Kids Hall County**, Friend of the Resource Center. Safe Kids Hall County works with Enota Elementary School to hold their Walk to School Days. Alicia was able to update the group, which included public health advocates, police, firemen, and local officials, about the latest news with the Resource Center. Several attendees were interested in the upcoming SRTS Forum and Alicia will send details once the event is planned.

East Central Territory - Taki Smith, School Outreach Coordinator

Taki maintains 86 Partners in the East Central Territory. In February, Taki signed on two new School Partners, **Morgan County Primary School** located in Morgan County and **Georgia Academy for the Blind** located in Bibb County. Taki focused on meeting with potential schools, travel plan meetings, composing the SRTS Wayfinding February Newsletter edition, promoting Georgia Walk to School Day (gWalk) and the Saris Bicycle Poster Contest, as well as delivering incentives for Walk to School Day.

On February 18, 2014, Taki attended her first Travel Plan meeting for Charles Ellis Montessori Academy, located in Savannah. The travel plan meeting consisted of Resource Center staff, Toole Design Group, engineers, local law enforcement, and school and community officials. Taki was able to partake in a Walk Audit for the school led by Toole Design Group, where she observed the after school traffic flow in the pick-up line and survey the nearby area to potential walkers and bikers. Taki supported Patti, the Coastal SOC and Project Manager, with surveying parents for the Travel Plan process.

Taki traveled to Greene, Morgan, Columbia, Toombs, Baldwin and Bibb Counties for meetings with Friends and Partners of the Resource Center, while distributing incentives to schools who registered for gWalk. In Richmond County, Taki met with Rene Hopkins, Coordinator for **Safe Kids-Greater Augusta**, Friend of the Resource Center. Taki and Rene met to begin planning a Child Pedestrian Safety Train the Trainer Training for Safe Kids volunteers, schools and local community stakeholders in the Richmond and Columbia County area. The training is still tentatively scheduled for Thursday, May 29, 2014 at the Safe Kids-Greater Augusta facility located in Richmond County. Taki will be the facilitator for the training and provide education and training on the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) Child Pedestrian Safety Curriculum.

Throughout the month of March, Taki will focus on supporting schools who are registered for Georgia Walk to School Day, continue to assist in the planning efforts of the travel plan for Charles Ellis Montessori Academy, and focus on meeting with active, non-active and potential School Partners in the East Central territory.

Southwest Territory - Chelsea Carter, School Outreach Coordinator

In the month of February, Chelsea focused on promoting Georgia Walk to School participation. At the end of month she had 14 of her 65 schools registered, six of them being newer partners. Chelsea spent the month traveling to help schools plan and coordinate their events. Along with Georgia Walk to School Day, Chelsea promoted the Saris Poster Contest. Additionally, Chelsea is working with schools to plan for Travel Tallies.

This month Chelsea has added two new partners and one strong prospect. Long time prospect **Carrollton Central Elementary School** in Carroll County officially signed on to the program when they registered for gWalk. **Whitesburg Elementary School** also signed on. Ellis Arnall Middle School is a strong prospect that is very interested in the educational aspect of our program as well as the events we help create. Chelsea began outreach in Appling County visiting the area and meeting with schools and community organizations.

While attending a **Safe Kids** lunch meeting in Columbus, Chelsea scheduled a NHTSA Pedestrian Education Workshop for schools as well as Friend organization with dates pending attendee availability. In addition to her 28 meetings this month, Chelsea had two presentations, both of which were on the NHTSA Curriculum. **North Mitchell County Elementary School** may implement the NHTSA Curriculum. On February 27th, Chelsea presented the idea of a workshop to the teachers and coaches. The idea of the workshop was presented again to the **Moultrie YMCA's** CEO and instructors on the 28th, in order to create a collaborative workshop with attendees from Colquitt, Thomas, and Lowndes Counties' YMCAs.

In March, Chelsea plans to attend Georgia Walk to School Events throughout the month. She has a presentation scheduled at the end of the month for the **South Georgia Regional Commission's** monthly meeting. Along with scheduling a 'Tally Timeline', Chelsea will continue creating relationships with already contacted prospects as well as increasing the quality of communication and participation of partnered schools for spring walking and biking events.

Coastal Georgia Territory - Patti Sistrunk, Project Manager

Patti supports relationships with 38 Partners in Coastal Georgia.

Travel Planning continued at **Charles Ellis Montessori Academy (CEMA)**, in Chatham County. Stakeholders attended two meetings at the school on February 18th and 20th. Carol Kachadoorian and Jessica Mortell from Toole Design Group facilitated the meetings with Patti's support. The February 18th meeting included a walk audit and dismissal observation. Attendees that included law enforcement officers, engineers, planners, advocates, CEMA staff, and parents discussed barriers and desired outcomes over maps of the area around CEMA. Taki and Chelsea attended to support and observe the meetings and assisted with preparation and research. On Wednesday, February 19th, the Resource Center team met with the City of Savannah to discuss proposed infrastructure. The second meeting at the school took place on the afternoon of the 20th and included many new participants in the planning process including Safe Kids Savannah representatives and someone from the Savannah Bicycle Campaign. At the meeting, the Resource Center team reviewed the ideas for infrastructure with the team. That evening, Carol presented to the February CEMA PTA meeting. Patti supported. We shared ideas and fielded questions about the plan.

Also, in February, Patti, Carol, and Jessica met with **Healthy Savannah** and Coastal YMCA representative, Paula Kreissler. Paula has been a long-time advocate of SRTS in Savannah. She is currently working on a grant with Healthy Savannah to implement a Complete Streets Policy. Carol's knowledge of **Complete Streets** in general and specifically in Georgia, the CEMA Travel Plan, and the Healthy Savannah focus on bicycle and pedestrian

accessibility provided for an effective meeting. Patti will be a key stakeholder on the Healthy Savannah project advisory committee, which will meet in late March.

Patti met with Godley Station School's parent Champion and other parents on February 7th to discuss traffic problems and concerns. The school, which is over capacity, has over 1600 students in kindergarten through eighth grade. Over 300 cars spill out onto the roads and impede traffic. The City of Savannah Traffic Engineering office recommended that Patti attend the traffic meeting at Godley Station to encourage walking and bicycling as a means of relieving traffic. Prior to the meeting, Patti met with a new school champion and discussed plans for walking school buses and bike trains. Patti assisted the Godley Station parents with a transportation count after the meeting on a cold morning. Despite being directly in front of a neighborhood and next to an apartment complex, only about 20 students walked or biked. The school is planning to participate in National Bike to School Day.

Marketing

The website was updated. Carol Kachadoorian, Marketing Manager, is working with a contract web developer and designer. Updates include:

- gWalk information
- Updated list of registered events (about 2 to 3 times per week)
- New graphics (images) at top and bottom of website

The Resource Center issued a February Newsletter mid-month. The Wayfinding newsletter was drafted by Taki and edited by Carol and Patti. It included information about gWalk registration.

Incentives were distributed to registered partners for gWalk events. Glow in the dark wristbands and updated pedestrian safety bookmarks were distributed leading up to gWalk. At the end of February, we had 107 registered events.

Thirty-day "Look Ahead" Period

Georgia Walk to School Day (gWalk) is March 5th. Schools will be encouraged to register and hold events throughout the month. The flagship GA SRTS Resource Center event will be promoted on the website, on Facebook, via email, in person, and with press releases. Each SOC will attend events in their territory. A post-event survey will go out to schools that participate the week of March 5th and results will be compiled.

In March, the Resource Center staff will develop the draft Travel Plan recommendations for the Springdale Park Elementary School and Charles Ellis Montessori Academy teams and distribute those recommendations for review and feedback.

The Resource Center team will review results from the survey conducted in February to determine forum interest, date, and location among key stakeholders. We will set a date for the Georgia SRTS Forum and develop an agenda, work with partners, and determine a location. Additionally, we'll develop a marketing plan for the forum including a save the date announcement and registration.

A March Newsletter will go out and will focus on promoting National Bike to School Day, announce the call for nominations for Partners of the Year, and encourage contacts to save the date for the Forum.

The Saris Poster Contest deadline is March 7th. Schools are encouraged to submit a 5th grader poster for the contest that Georgia SRTS is coordinating. The top posters will be featured on Facebook where supporters can "Like" the poster they prefer. The winner will be announced in April and will go on to compete nationally.